United Nations A/ES-10/327-S/2006/217

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
5 April 2006

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-first year

Letter dated 4 April 2006 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Enclosed please find a letter dated 4 April 2006 addressed to you by Mahmoud Zahhar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Palestinian National Authority (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council and of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 4 April 2006 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

Palestinian National Authority
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Office of the Minister

4 April 2006

His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan
Secretary-General of the United Nations

Sir,

I have the pleasure, at the outset of this, my first letter to you, to express to you our appreciation for your continuing efforts and tireless work towards firmly establishing the values of justice, equality and development and the preservation of international peace and security. It is also a pleasure for me to express, through you, our appreciation of the role of the United Nations, its bodies and its specialized agencies in offering the necessary support to the Palestinian people and the Palestinian National Authority. In this context, I wish to stress the importance of the role of the United Nations and its ongoing historical responsibility towards the Palestinian cause until a just and comprehensive solution is reached on all the issues, as well as your important and constructive role within the Quartet, aimed at putting an end to the Israeli occupation and the state of conflict and bringing about a just and comprehensive peace. Through this letter I appeal to you to seek within the Quartet the start of an earnest, constructive dialogue with the Palestinian National Authority and its new Government.

The new Palestinian Government has received its assignments, beginning its work on 30 March 2006, and I myself have been appointed to the post of Minister for Foreign Affairs. This Government came into being as a result of the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to choose their Government by means of free and fair democratic elections, as witnessed by the United Nations and the entire world. We look to the international community to respect the democratic choice of the Palestinian people and to work with this Government towards strengthening that democratic trend and safeguarding political pluralism as we move towards peace and stability in the region.

We trust that you will work with the international community and within the Quartet to ensure that support for the Palestinian people and their institutions continues and that they are enabled to obtain their legitimate rights, including the right to establish an independent, fully sovereign State with Jerusalem as its capital and the rights of return and compensation of Palestinian refugees. We also hope that certain States will re-examine the premature stands and hasty decisions they have taken, especially with regard to withholding assistance and adopting a language of threats rather than dialogue. Here I wish to assure you that our Government is ready to engage in earnest, constructive dialogue and to work together with the United Nations and the various countries of the world towards strengthening international peace and security and achieving peace and stability in our own region, based on a just and comprehensive solution.

Mr. Secretary-General,

Israel, the occupying power, still continues to move forward with its illegal settlement policies, seizing land, attempting to annex it de facto, expanding settlements and even starting the implementation of what is known as the E1 plan, the purpose of which is the total expropriation of East Jerusalem and the division of the West Bank into bantustans isolated from one another. All this, together with recent Israeli steps to cut off the Palestinian Aghwar (Jordan valley area) and prevent its inhabitants from gaining access to their fields and the destruction of their homes in order to force them to leave, so as to be able to impose de facto annexation of the area, will definitively rule out any hope of achieving a settlement and peace based on a two-state solution.

Furthermore, the Israeli occupying forces continue their unremitting aggression against our people oppressed by the occupation, making excessive use of military force, as in the operations, during the past few days, of bombing and destruction of infrastructures and civilian and sports facilities, in which they twice targeted a football field in the Gaza Strip, employing warplanes and heavy artillery against areas with dense civilian populations. They also continue to pursue their policy of extrajudicial killing, imposing sieges and closures on many parts of the occupied Palestinian territory, refusing to pay moneys owing to us that are in their possession and turning military checkpoints at the entrances to towns in the West Bank into something more akin to international border-crossings. The blockade and closure of the Gaza Strip has created a tragic humanitarian situation that has led numerous international and humanitarian institutions to warn of a deterioration of the humanitarian situation owing to the blocking by the occupation authorities of the entry into the Gaza Strip of basic humanitarian supplies such as medicines and basic food-tuffs, including flour and milk for infants. Israel carries out these illegal measures before the eyes and ears of the world, with little concern for the grave violations of international law and international humanitarian law that they entail, as if it were a State above the law.

The international community is called on today to take urgent, tangible steps to put an end to these grave Israeli violations of international law; to exert pressure on Israel to abide by international law and, in particular, international humanitarian law; and to comply with international agreements and the advisory legal opinion of the International Court of Justice. We further call on the international community to reject unilateral measures and solutions, live up to its commitments and fulfil its duties, especially with regard to respect for and the ensuring of respect for, international humanitarian law in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, as stressed by the Security Council in numerous resolutions.

Mr. Secretary-General,

We believe ours is a just cause. We have faith in the ability of our people to hold out and to stand up to the military occupation of our land and the occupier's illegal measures. We also believe that the solution must be founded on justice and law, the only basis for security and stability in the region. The logic of using force and of attempting to impose faits accomplis is an unsound logic that is doomed to failure. It can only lead to more destruction and instability. We, like all the other peoples of the world, look forward to a life of peace and security, a life of dignity in which our people enjoy freedom and independence side by side with the rest of our neighbours in this sacred corner of the world.